

Containing the freshest Advices; Foreign and Domestic.

WEDNESDAY, March 2, 1748.

From the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE for August, 1747.

*Copy of a Letter from a * Person of Distinction at the Hague, to the Abbe De la Ville, on the Order against publishing News-Papers at Paris; in which is contained a Multitude of Particulars relating to the Battle of Fontenoy, that have not hitherto been made public.*

[* Earl of CHESTERFIELD.]

S I R,

AM somewhat surprized that your Excellency should imagine that the Reaso^s, which induce the Parliament of Paris to interpose so vigorously with Regard to the News transmitted from thence into these Provinces, have escaped our Notice, or that you should take it ill I expressed myself as I did last Night upon that Subject. You were then pleas'd to wish, that I would give you my Thoughts at large upon this Head, because you said, you were fatigued that upon Recollection I would change them. You are mistaken, Sir; I have recollected myself, and am confirm'd in what I then deliver'd as my Opinion; which was, that this Prohibition of writing News was grounded in too great Fear of your News-Writers sending unwelcome Truths into the Provinces of your own Country; whereas, I am persuaded, that the Things you were afraid they should have published, are most of them of such a Nature, that they durst not have published them, even if this taudering Edict, big with Imprisonment and Gallies, had never appear'd.

This is the Point, at your Excellency's Request, which I am to make good; and if in making it good, I tell you unwelcome Truths, such as you did not imagine were known, you must not blame me but yourself. 'Tis a failing very common to great Ministers, that they are so jealous for the Service of their Masters, that they would really rage all People entertain such Notions as they profess they entertain themselves; and therefore, they bear with very little Patience such Freedoms as are incompatible with the Measures of Submission. But to the Point:—Give me Leave to ask you, whether you think any News-Writers in France durst have published to the World, that the royal Army, since the 11th of May last, has lost 19,347 Men, exclusive of Deserters, of which there are so many, that the Austrians are actually forming them into independent Companies? Yet this Fact is true, as I can shew you by the Certificates on the Muster-Rolls, transmitted to *Life and Dewey*.

Do you conceive, Sir, that any Man would have wrote to any or any of his Correspondents in the Provinces of France, that all that has been published in your Gazettes, of the King's Disposition, of the King's Orders, the King's charging at the Head of his Household Troops, the King's exposing himself in riding to the Regiment of the Crown through the warriest of the Foes, were all Forgeries and Fictions? And that his Majesty never paid the *Scheld*, but was just as safe in his Post, as he would have been at *Verfailles*? Not to say, Sir, and his Majesty was told by the great Marlborough himself, that he was responsible to the Nation for his Majesty's Person; and that therefore he could not suffer him to expose himself, as the King might otherwise have done. His Majesty's Courage is not in Question: All we speak of is where he was.

Is it you really assure that there is a Man at Paris, mad enough, I won't say, to tell the World, but to whisper his Whimsies notwithstanding the kind, the tender, the charitable Order of his good Christian Majesty was pleas'd to give, with regard to the unhappy Wags, that after being admir'd for their valour and integrity, were by the Force of War recommended in the Field of Battle, his Soldiers should knock out the Brains of the English, with the Ends of their Muskets, with such generous Excessions as these in their Minds, it is not your Duty to say? The Fact is strange and unnecessary, altogether inconsistent with the Laws of Humanity, or

the Rules of War, quite irreconcilable with the boasted Valour, and, to speak the Truth, with the usual Practice of the French Nation. But here lies the Mischief after all; that notwithstanding these Exaggerations, in spite of these Improbabilities, 'tis still a Fact, a certain and incontestable Fact.

What Gazette, think you, would have reported, that a Trumpet from the Allied Army carried the King a Coffin, seal'd with the Arms of the Duke of Cumberland, the General Count de Ronnegg, Prince Waldeck, and Baron Wendt, fill'd with Pieces of thick Glais, brass and iron Buttons, all bloody, that were taken out of the Wounds of Lieutenant-General Campbell, and of other Officers and Soldiers? Who durst have publish'd this? Or who do you think would have been hardy enough to have own'd, that all the Dutch wounded Soldiers, that were carried to *Mons*, died with their Bodies so swollen, that they were ready to burst?

What News-writer would have ventur'd to do so much Justice to his most Christian Majesty, as to have acknowledged, that upon sight of these dismal Reliques, and the reading a very modest Letter from the Duke of Cumberland, importing that the most cruel and barbarous Nations never made use of such Kind of Weapons in carrying on War, his Majesty turn'd pale; and afterwards quitted the Room, to avoid expressing his Sentiments.

Who would have valued himself on devising the Answer that was given upon the Spot to these Complaints, by Men whose Heads are so fertile in Expedients, that as they dared any thing, so there is nothing they can't excuse when done? They said that the same Thing had been practis'd by the Allies at the Battle of *Duttingen*. But who can believe this? Who can imagine, if there had been any such Thing practis'd, we should not have heard of it before, or that the same Steps should not have been taken by the French Generals in that Case, which was taken in this by the Officers of the Allies? But it is better to frame an Untruth, than to be without any Excuse at all, than to be obliged to avow a Design to murder, and Resolution to break through all the Rules of War, against his Enemy, that has ever adher'd to them with the most scrupulous Nicety; and will be, even now, very unwilling to make use of the just Laws of Reprisals against such as deserve it in the highest Degree.

What News-writer of Paris would have made the World acquainted with the very strange Conduct, that was pursued by the French Generals, in regard to the Wounded? They, first of all, sent to the Allies, to desire they would carry them off: Upon which the Duke of Cumberland wrote the gentlest Letter in the World, and sent, agreeable to their Demands, 100 Waggon's to bring off the wounded Men: Instead of which, both Waggon's and Men were detained, contrary to the Laws of Nations and of Arms, with regard to the Carriages at least. These things are new and extravagant, scarce ever heard of among Savages and Barbarians; but could be expected, any the least, scarce to be believ'd, when reported of the French, who pique themselves so much on behaving with Honour in all Things, but more especially in War, which you know, Sir, has it's Laws as well as Peace: Laws intended, naturally, and imposed to, by the bravest and most estim'd Nations, and which is still more, the more practising of which has been constantly regarded as the most infamous Note of Barbarity. But to wave Reflections, and to proceed to my Catalogue of Facts.

In what Gazette do you think, we should ever have read, that English Officers, made Prisoners of War, when wounded, were oblig'd to be carried to the Hospitals, and the Assistance of Surgeons, to their Wounds, in themselves not mortal; so that the Wounds were intended to become mortal, by the Kind of Usage notwithstanding the warmest Remonstrances; and their procuring the Interposition of Officers of Direction in their Favour, which English Generals, however daring, and giving in their Names to the capable of being prov'd in Manuscript, and by Letters under the Hands of those Gentlemen, setting forth their Cases,